

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1 - 21 (cancelled)

22. (New) In a threaded insert having a bushing portion and at least one key, the bushing portion having a substantially cylindrical shape with a first end, a second end and a threaded central bore therethrough, an external surface of the bushing portion including male threads throughout the length of the bushing portion, and at least one slot extending substantially longitudinally throughout the length of the bushing portion positioned on the external surface of the bushing portion, the slot having a bottom surface and two wall surfaces, the two wall surfaces being substantially parallel to each other and substantially perpendicular to the bottom surface, the depth of the slot being greater than the depth of the male threads on the external surface; the at least one key having a substantially longitudinal locking portion connected to a substantially longitudinal tang portion, the substantially longitudinal tang portion including a first end, a second end, a first face, a second face, a first side surface and a second side surface, the substantially longitudinal locking portion including a first end, a second end and a substantially triangular cross section, the triangular cross section forming a back face and two angled faces; the tang portion of the at least one key being positioned within the at least one slot toward the first end of the bushing portion with the locking portion of the at least one key extending beyond the first end of the bushing portion; and the depth of the at least one slot of the bushing portion being sufficient that the apex of the second surface of the tang portion of the at least one key is positioned at a depth deeper than the inside diameter of

the male threads on the external surface of the bushing portion and the intersection of the two angled faces of the locking portion of the at least one key is positioned at a depth shallower than the inside diameter of the male threads on the external surface of the bushing portion; and the edge between the first face and the first side surface of the tang portion and the edge between the first face and the second side surface of the tang portion being positioned in contact with the bottom surface of the slot in the bushing portion, the improvement in the threaded insert comprising:

the first face and the second face of the substantially longitudinal tang portion being substantially parallel and having a curved profile.

23. (New) The threaded insert of claim 22, wherein the male threads on the external surface of the bushing portion are configured to mate with a threaded hole in a parent material.

24. (New) The threaded insert of claim 22, wherein the female threads within the central bore of the bushing portion are configured to mate with a male threaded fastener.

25. (New) The threaded insert of claim 22, wherein the at least one key comprises four keys, the four keys being positioned approximately ninety degrees apart from each other about the circumference of the bushing portion.

26. (New) The threaded insert of claim 22, wherein:

the first side surface of the tang portion of the at least one key is substantially perpendicular to a tangent along the first face of the tang portion at the intersection of the first side surface and the first face; and

the second side surface of the tang portion of the at least one key is substantially perpendicular to a tangent along the first face of the tang portion at the intersection of the second side surface and the first face.

27. (New) The threaded insert of claim 22, wherein the angled faces of the locking portion of the at least one key taper into the second face of the tang portion of the at least one key.

28. (New) The threaded insert of claim 27, wherein the taper includes an angled taper.

29. (New) The threaded insert of claim 27, wherein the taper includes a curved taper.

30. (New) The threaded insert of claim 22, wherein the intersection of the angled faces of the locking portion of the at least one key is positioned substantially flush with the outside diameter of the male threads on the external surface of the bushing portion.

31. (New) The threaded insert of claim 22, wherein the intersection of the angled faces of the locking portion of the at least one key is positioned below flush with the outside diameter of the male threads on the external surface of the bushing portion.

32. (New) The threaded insert of claim 22, wherein the intersection of the angled faces of the locking portion of the at least one key is positioned above flush with the outside diameter of the male threads on the external surface of the bushing portion.

33. (New) The threaded insert of claim 22, further comprising an end surface at the first end of the locking portion of the at least one key, the end surface being substantially perpendicular to the back face and the two angled faces of the locking portion.

34. (New) The threaded insert of claim 22, wherein the entire locking portion of the at least one key extends beyond the first end of the bushing portion.

35. (New) The threaded insert of claim 22, wherein the first side surface and the second side surface of the tang portion of the at least one key have an interference fit with the two walls within the at least one slot of the bushing portion.

36. (New) The threaded insert of claim 22, wherein the first face has a concave surface, and the second face has a convex surface.